

Federal Emergency Management Agency, DHS

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§ 10.14 Flood plains and wetlands.

For any action taken by FEMA in a flood plain or wetland, the provisions of this part are supplemental to, and not instead of, the provisions of the FEMA regulation implementing Executive Order 11988, Flood Plain Management, and Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands (44 CFR part 9).

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AUTHORITY: 31 U.S.C. 3701 *et seq.*

SOURCE: 45 FR 15930, Mar. 12, 1980, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§ 11.1 General collection standards.

The general standards and procedures governing the collection, compromise, termination and referral to the Department of Justice of claims for money and property that are prescribed in the regulations issued jointly by the General Accounting Office and the Department of Justice pursuant to the Federal Claims Collection Act of 1966 (4 CFR part 101 *et seq.*), apply to the administrative claim collection activities

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of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

§ 11.2 Delegations of authority.

Any and all claims that arise under subchapter III of chapter 83, chapter 87 and chapter 88 of title 5, the United States Code, the Retired Federal Employees Health Benefits Act (74 Stat. 849), the Panama Canal Construction Annuity Act (58 Stat. 257), and the Lighthouse Service Widow's Annuity Act (64 Stat. 465) shall be referred to the Director of the Bureau of Retirement and Insurance, Office of Personnel Management, for handling. The General Counsel, FEMA shall act on all other claims against FEMA for money and property.

Subpart B—Administrative Claims Under Federal Tort Claims Act

§ 11.10 Scope of regulation.

This regulation applies to claims asserted under the Federal Tort Claims Act against the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). It does not include any contractor with FEMA.

§ 11.11 Administrative claim; when presented; appropriate FEMA office.

(a) For the purpose of this part, and the provisions of the Federal Tort Claims Act a claim is deemed to have been presented when FEMA receives, at a place designated in paragraph (b) or (c) of this section, an executed "Claim for Damage or Injury," Standard Form 95, or other written notification of an incident, accompanied by a claim for money damages in a sum certain for injury to or loss of property, for personal injury, or for death alleged to have occurred by reason of the incident. A claim which should have been presented to FEMA, but which was mistakenly addressed to or filed with another Federal agency, is deemed to be presented to FEMA as of the date that the claim is received by FEMA. If a claim is mistakenly addressed to or filed with FEMA, the claim shall forthwith be transferred to the appropriate Federal Agency, if ascertainable, or returned to the claimant.

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(b) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, a claimant shall mail or deliver his or her claim to the Office of General Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington, DC, 20472.

(c) When a claim is for \$200 or less, does not involve a personal injury, and involves a FEMA regional employee, the claimant shall mail or deliver the claim to the Director of the FEMA Regional Office in which is employed the FEMA employee whose negligence or wrongful act or omission is alleged to have caused the loss or injury complained of. The addresses of the Regional Offices of FEMA are set out in part 2 of this chapter.

(d) A claim presented in compliance with paragraph (a) of this section may be amended by the claimant at any time prior to final FEMA action or prior to the exercise of the claimant's option under 28 U.S.C. 2675(a). Amendments shall be submitted in writing and signed by the claimant or his or her duly authorized agent or legal representative. Upon the timely filing of an amendment to a pending claim, FEMA shall have six months in which to make a final disposition of the claim as amended and the claimant's option under 28 U.S.C. 2675(a) shall not accrue until six months after the filing of an amendment.

[45 FR 15930, Mar. 12, 1980, as amended at 48 FR 6711, Feb. 15, 1983; 49 FR 33879, Aug. 27, 1984]

§ 11.12 Administrative claim; who may file.

(a) A claim for injury to or loss of property may be presented by the owner of the property interest which is the subject of the claim, his or her authorized agent, or legal representative.

(b) A claim for personal injury may be presented by the injured person or, his or her authorized agent or legal representative.

(c) A claim based on death may be presented by the executor or administrator of the decedent's estate or by any other person legally entitled to assert such a claim under applicable State law.

(d) A claim for loss wholly compensated by an insurer with the rights of a subrogee may be presented by the

insurer or the insured individually, as their respective interests appear, or jointly. When an insurer presents a claim asserting the rights of a subrogee, he or she shall present with the claim appropriate evidence that he or she has the rights of a subrogee.

(e) A claim presented by an agent or legal representative shall be presented in the name of the claimant, be signed by the agent or legal representative, show the title of legal capacity of the person signing, and be accompanied by evidence of his or her authority to present a claim on behalf of the claimant as agent, executor, administrator, parent, guardian, or other representative.

§ 11.13 Investigations.

FEMA may investigate, or may request any other Federal agency to investigate, a claim filed under this part.

§ 11.14 Administrative claim; evidence and information to be submitted.

(a) *Death.* In support of a claim based on death the claimant may be required to submit the following evidence or information:

(1) An authenticated death certificate or other competent evidence showing cause of death, date of death, and age of the decedent.

(2) Decedent's employment or occupation at time of death, including his or her monthly or yearly salary or earnings (if any), and the duration of his or her last employment or occupation.

(3) Full names, addresses, birth dates, kinship, and marital status of the decedent's survivors, including identification of those survivors who were dependent for support on the decedent at the time of his or her death.

(4) Degree of support afforded by the decedent to each survivor dependent on him or her for support at the time of death.

(5) Decedent's general physical and mental condition before death.

(6) Itemized bills or medical and burial expenses incurred by reason of the incident causing death, or itemized receipts of payment for such expenses.

(7) If damages for pain and suffering before death are claimed, a physician's detailed statement specifying the inju-

ries suffered, duration of pain and suffering, any drugs administered for pain, and the decedent's physical condition in the interval between injury and death.

(8) Any other evidence or information which may have a bearing on either the responsibility of the United States for the death or the amount of damages claimed.

(b) *Personal injury.* In support of a claim for personal injury, including pain and suffering, the claimant may be required to submit the following evidence or information:

(1) A written report by his or her attending physician or dentist setting forth the nature and extent of the injury, nature and extent of treatment, any degree of temporary or permanent disability, the prognosis, period of hospitalization, and any diminished earning capacity. In addition, the claimant may be required to submit to a physical or mental examination by a physician employed by FEMA or another Federal agency. FEMA shall make available to the claimant a copy of the report of the examining physician on written request by the claimant, if he or she has, on request, furnished the report referred to in the first sentence of this subparagraph and has made or agrees to make available to FEMA any other physician's reports previously or thereafter made of the physical or mental condition which is the subject matter of the claim.

(2) Itemized bills for medical, dental, and hospital expenses incurred, or itemized receipts of payment of such expenses.

(3) If the prognosis reveals the necessity for future treatment, a statement of expected expenses for such treatment.

(4) If a claim is made for loss of time from employment, a written statement from the employer showing actual time lost from employment, whether he or she is a full- or part-time employee, and wages or salary actually lost.

(5) If a claim is made for loss of income and the claimant is self-employed, documentary evidence showing the amount of earnings actually lost.

(6) Any other evidence or information which may have a bearing on either the responsibility of the United States for

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the personal injury or the damages claimed.

(c) *Property damage.* In support of a claim for injury to or loss of property, real or personal, the claimant may be required to submit the following evidence or information:

(1) Proof of ownership of the property interest which is the subject of the claim.

(2) A detailed statement of the amount claimed with respect to each item of property.

(3) An itemized receipt of payment for necessary repairs or itemized written estimates of the cost of such repairs.

(4) A statement listing date of purchase, purchase price, and salvage value, where repair is not economical.

(5) Any other evidence or information which may have a bearing on either the responsibility of the United States for the injury to or loss of property or the damages claimed.

§ 11.15 Authority to adjust, determine, compromise and settle.

(a) The General Counsel of FEMA, or a designee of the General Counsel, is delegated authority to consider, ascertain, adjust, determine, compromise, and settle claims under the provisions of section 2672 of title 28, United States Code, and this part.

(b) Notwithstanding the delegation of authority in paragraph (a) of this section, a Regional Director is delegated authority to be exercised in his or her discretion, to consider, ascertain, adjust, determine, compromise, and settle under the provisions of section 2672 of title 28, United States Code, and this part, any claim for \$200 or less which is based on alleged negligence or wrongful act or omission of an employee of the appropriate Region, except when:

(1) There are personal injuries to either Government personnel or individuals not employed by the Government; or

(2) All damage to Government property or to property being used by FEMA, or both, is more than \$200, or all damage to non-Government property being used by individuals not em-

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ployed by the Government is more than \$200.

[45 FR 15930, Mar. 12, 1980, as amended at 48 FR 6711, Feb. 15, 1983]

§ 11.16 Limitations on authority.

(a) An award, compromise, or settlement of a claim under this part in excess of \$25,000 may be effected only with the advance written approval of the Attorney General or his or her designee. For the purpose of this paragraph, a principal claim and any derivative or subrogated claim shall be treated as a single claim.

(b) An administrative claim may be adjusted, determined, compromised, or settled under this part only after consultation with the Department of Justice, when, in the opinion of the General Counsel of FEMA or his or her designee:

(1) A new precedent or a new point of law is involved; or

(2) A question of policy is or may be involved; or

(3) The United States is or may be entitled to indemnity or contribution from a third party and FEMA is unable to adjust the third party claim; or

(4) The compromise of a particular claim, as a practical matter, will or may control the disposition of a related claim in which the amount to be paid may exceed \$25,000.

(c) An administrative claim may be adjusted, determined, compromised or settled under this part only after consultation with the Department of Justice when FEMA is informed or is otherwise aware that the United States or an employee, agent or cost-type contractor of the United States is involved in litigation based on a claim arising out of the same incident or transaction.

§ 11.17 Referral to Department of Justice.

When Department of Justice approval or consultation is required under § 11.16, the referral or request shall be transmitted to the Department of Justice by the General Counsel or his or her designee.

§ 11.18 Final denial of claim.

(a) Final denial of an administrative claim under this part shall be in writing and sent to the claimant, his or her attorney, or legal representative by certified or registered mail. The notification of final denial may include a statement of the reasons for the denial and shall include a statement that, if the claimant is dissatisfied with the FEMA action, he or she may file suit in an appropriate U.S. District Court not later than 6 months after the date of mailing of the notification.

(b) Prior to the commencement of suit and prior to the expiration of the 6-month period provided in 28 U.S.C. 2401(b), a claimant, his or her duly authorized agent, or legal representative, may file a written request with FEMA for reconsideration of a final denial of a claim under paragraph (a) of this section. Upon the timely filing of a request for reconsideration the FEMA shall have 6 months from the date of filing in which to make a final FEMA disposition of the claim and the claimant's option under 28 U.S.C. 2675(a) shall not accrue until 6 months after the filing of a request for reconsideration. Final FEMA action on a request for reconsideration shall be effected in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section.

§ 11.19 Action on approved claim.

(a) Payment of a claim approved under this part is contingent on claimant's execution of (1) a "Claim for Damage or Injury," Standard Form 95, or a claims settlement agreement, and (2) a "Voucher for Payment," Standard Form 1145, as appropriate. When a claimant is represented by an attorney, the voucher for payment shall designate both the claimant and his or her attorney as payees, and the check shall be delivered to the attorney, whose address shall appear on the voucher.

(b) Acceptance by the claimant, his or her agent, or legal representative, of an award, compromise, or settlement made under section 2672 or 2677 of title 28, United States Code, is final and conclusive on the claimant, his or her agent or legal representative, and any other person on whose behalf or for whose benefit the claim has been presented, and constitutes a complete re-

lease of any claim against the United States and against any employee of the Government whose act or omission gave rise to the claim, by reason of the same subject matter.

Subpart C—Collection of Debts by the Government Under the Debt Collection Act of 1982

AUTHORITY: 31 U.S.C. 3711 *et seq.*

SOURCE: 49 FR 38267, Sept. 28, 1984, unless otherwise noted.

§ 11.30 Scope of regulations.

(a) *Scope.* This regulation implements policies used by FEMA to collect debts under the Debt Collection Act of 1982, as amended, 31 U.S.C. 3701 *et seq.* As amended, this Act:

(1) Requires the Director or designee to attempt collection of all debts owed to the United States for money or property arising out of activities of the Agency; and

(2) Authorizes the Director or his designee, for debts not exceeding \$100,000 or such higher limit prescribed by the Attorney General of the United States, under the provisions of 31 U.S.C. 3711(a)(2), exclusive of interest, penalty, and administrative charges, to compromise such debts or terminate collection action where it appears that no person is liable on such debt or has the present or prospective financial ability to pay a significant sum thereon or that the cost of collecting such debt is likely to exceed the amount of the recovery.

(b) *Definitions.* For purposes of this subpart, the following definitions apply:

(1) *Office* means any of the following:

- (i) United States Fire Administration.
- (ii) Federal Insurance Administration.
- (iii) National Preparedness Directorate.
- (iv) State & Local Programs & Support Directorate.
- (v) U.S. Fire Academy/National Emergency Training Center.
- (vi) Office of Financial Management, which for purposes of this subpart shall include all FEMA Headquarters elements not included in paragraphs

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(b)(1)(ii) through (b)(1)(iv) of this section.

(vii) FEMA Special Facility.

(2) *Employee* means those persons defined in 5 U.S.C. 2104, members of and retirees from the uniformed services of the United States and employees of and retirees from the United States Postal Service and the Postal Rate Commission.

[57 FR 54714, Nov. 20, 1992]

§ 11.31 Adoption of joint standards.

All administrative actions to collect debts arising out of activities of the Agency shall be performed in accordance with the applicable standards prescribed either in 4 CFR parts 101 through 105 or any standards promulgated jointly by the Attorney General and the Comptroller General. Such standards are adopted as a part of this subpart and are supplemented in this subpart. Additional guidance will be found in the GAO Policy and Procedures Manual for Guidance of Federal Agencies and in the Treasury Fiscal Requirements Manual.

§ 11.32 Subdivision and joining of debts.

(a) A debtor's liability arising from a particular transaction or contract shall be considered as a single debt in determining whether the debt is one not exceeding \$100,000 or such higher limit prescribed by the Attorney General in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(a)(2) exclusive of interest for the purpose of compromise or termination of collection action. Such a debt may not be subdivided to avoid the monetary ceiling established by the Act.

(b) Joining of two or more single debts in a demand upon a particular debtor for payment totaling more than \$100,000 or such higher limit prescribed by the Attorney General in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(a)(2) does not preclude compromise or termination of collection action with respect to any one of such debts that do not exceed \$100,000 or such higher limit prescribed by the Attorney General in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(a)(2) exclusive of interest.

[49 FR 38267, Sept. 28, 1984, as amended at 57 FR 54714, Nov. 20, 1992]

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§ 11.33 Authority of offices to attempt collection of debts.

The head of each office and each regional director shall designate a debt collections officer (DCO) who shall attempt to collect in full all debts of the Agency for money or property arising out of the activities of such office. Each DCO shall establish and currently maintain a file with regard to each debt for which collection activities are undertaken. Insofar as it is feasible, debt collection personnel shall have personal interviews or telephone contact with the debtor.

§ 11.34 Referral of debts to the Chief Financial Officer, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(a) Authority of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(1) The Chief Financial Officer, Federal Emergency Management Agency, is designated as the Agency Collections Officer (ACO). In this capacity he or she shall exercise such powers and perform duties of the Director in collecting debts owed FEMA. In this regard, the ACO may, after consultation with the Office of the General Counsel, compromise, suspend or terminate collection action on the debts owed the Agency, not exceeding \$100,000, or such higher limit prescribed by the Attorney General in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(a)(2), exclusive of interest, except as provided in § 11.35 and paragraph (b) of this section. In addition, the CFO is delegated all authority which may be exercised by the Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency in relation to:

(i) Disclosure to a consumer reporting agency in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(f),

(ii) Instituting salary offset procedures in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 5514(a),

(iii) Instituting administrative offset procedures in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3716,

(iv) Charging of interest and penalties in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3717,

(v) Entering into contracts for collection of debts in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3718, except that the execution and administration of such contracts is

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delegated to Federal Emergency Management Agency contracting officers appointed under provisions of 48 CFR 1.603-3,

(vi) Prescribe debt collection procedures and manage debt collection activities within the Agency.

(2) When initial attempts at collection by the office originating such debt have not been fully successful, the debt file shall be forwarded to the ACO for further administrative collection procedures. Debts shall be referred to the ACO well within the applicable statute of limitations (28 U.S.C. 2415 and 2416).

(b) *Exclusions.* There shall be no compromised or terminated collection action with respect to any debt: (1) As to which there is an indication of fraud, the presentation of a false claim, or misrepresentation on the part of the debtor or any other party having an interest in the claim; (2) based in whole or in part on conduct in violation of the anti-trust laws; (3) based on tax statutes; or (4) arising from an exception made by the General Accounting Office in the account of an accountable officer. Such a debt shall be promptly referred to the Justice Department, or GAO, as appropriate, after ACO has consulted with the Inspector General and the Office of General Counsel.

(c) *Delegation.* The ACO may delegate his or her authority in the FEMA debt collection program and under this subpart to a Deputy or to others in the FEMA Office of Financial Management. However, the ACO must personally approve any compromise, suspension or termination of collection efforts on debts exceeding \$10,000.00.

[49 FR 38267, Sept. 28, 1984, as amended at 50 FR 40007, Oct. 1, 1985; 53 FR 47211, Nov. 22, 1988; 57 FR 54714, Nov. 20, 1992]

§ 11.35 Authority of offices to compromise debts or suspend or terminate collection action.

Where it appears that the cost of collecting a debt of \$2,500 or less will exceed the amount of recovery, the DCO is authorized to compromise the debt or to terminate collection action. Further, DCO's are authorized to compromise a debt or terminate or suspend collection action for debts of \$2,500 or less where:

(a) Debtor cannot be located despite vigorous efforts, including but not limited to, use of skip tracing services, have failed to ascertain the debtor's current address.

(b) Debtor is financially unable to pay in full or in part. DCO's must obtain a financial statement from the debtor in such cases.

(c) The debt is without merit or cannot be substantiated by evidence. In such cases, debt collection officers should secure the advice of counsel. DCO's must document the debt file to show all evidence and reasons for compromise or termination of such debts. The DCO must prepare a narrative report and forward a copy of the report to the ACO.

[49 FR 38267, Sept. 28, 1984, as amended at 53 FR 47211, Nov. 22, 1988]

§ 11.36 Debt collection files.

Each DCO is responsible for obtaining current credit data about each person against whom a debt is pending in his office. The files shall be kept up-to-date by the ACO for claims referred to his/her office for collection. Such credit data may take the form of:

(a) A commercial credit report, showing the debtor's assets and liabilities and his income and expenses,

(b) The individual debtor's own financial statement, executed under penalty for false claim, reflecting his assets and liabilities and his income and expenses, or

(c) An audited balance sheet of a corporate debtor.

The file should also contain a checklist or brief summary of action taken to collect or compromise a debt. All debts files relating to debts owed by individuals are to be safeguarded in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552a, popularly known as the "Privacy Act of 1974"; 31 U.S.C. 3711 *et seq.*, popularly known as the "Debt Collection Act of 1982"; 44 CFR part 6 and this subpart. Each DCO is responsible for maintaining files on debtors with information sufficient to enable the Government to effectuate administrative or judicial collection.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3067-0122)

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§ 11.37 [Reserved]

§ 11.38 Annual reports to the Director, Office of Management and Budget, and the Secretary of the Treasury.

(a) The ACO shall gather data on loans, accounts receivable, and debts which are required by 31 U.S.C. 3719 and shall transmit them to the Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency. Such data shall include:

(1) The total amount of loans and accounts receivable owed to the Agency and when the funds owed to the Agency are due to be repaid;

(2) The total amount of receivables and number of debts that are at least thirty days past due;

(3) Total amount written off as uncollectable, actual, and allowed for;

(4) The rate of interest charged for overdue debts and the amount of interest charged and collected on debts;

(5) The total number of debts and total amount collected;

(6) The number of debts and the total amount of debts referred to the Department of Justice for settlement or collection and the total number of debts and the total amount of debts settled or collected by that Department;

(7) For each program or activity administered by the Agency, the data described in paragraphs (a) (1) through (6) of this section; and

(8) Such other data as the Director, Office of Management and Budget, shall prescribe by regulations issued under authority of 31 U.S.C. 3719.

(b) Data described in paragraph (a) of this section shall be collected on a calendar year basis and transmitted to the Director, FEMA not later than the end of January of the year following the year for which the data described in paragraph (a) of this section, were collected. The Director, FEMA, shall report these data to the Secretary of the Treasury and the Director, Office of Management and Budget in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3719. If the Secretary of the Treasury and the Director, Office of Management and Budget prescribe, by regulation, a different annual reporting cycle, the Agency's reporting cycle, described in the first sentence of this subsection shall be changed to conform with the cycle prescribed by the Department of the

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Treasury and Office of Management and Budget regulation.

§ 11.40 Records retention.

The file of each debt on which administrative collection action has been completed shall be retained by the appropriate officer not less than 1 year after the applicable statute of limitations has run.

§ 11.41 Suspension or revocation of eligibility.

(a) Where a contractor, grantee, or other participant in programs sponsored by the Agency fails to pay his debts to the Agency within a reasonable time after demand, the fact shall be reported by the ACO to the Inspector General and to the Office of Acquisition Management, which shall place such defaulting participant's name on the Agency's list of debarred, suspended and ineligible contractors and grantees. The participant will be so advised. Suspension or revocation of eligibility may be waived in whole or in part in the case of grants for disaster programs administered by FEMA, if the Director FEMA, so directs.

(b) The failure of any surety to honor its obligations in accordance with 6 U.S.C. 11 is to be reported at once to the ACO, who shall so advise the Treasury Department. That Department will notify this Agency when a surety's certificate of authority to do business with the Government has been revoked or forfeited.

(c) Failure by a recipient of FEMA financial or nonfinancial assistance to pay a substantial debt or a number of outstanding debts being collected under this subpart may be ground for Government-wide debarment and suspension as described in 44 CFR 17.305(c)(3).

[49 FR 38267, Sept. 28, 1984, as amended at 57 FR 54715, Nov. 20, 1992]

§ 11.42 Demand for payment of debts.

(a) *Initial demand.* An initial demand shall be made in writing and sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or delivered by hand to the debtor identifying the debt and advising that the full amount due should be paid by a specified date, not less than 30 days from the date of mailing or the

hand delivery. If the debtor is other than a State or local government or an agency of the United States, the initial demand notice shall also advise the debtor that interest, calculated at rates provided by 31 U.S.C. 3717(a), shall be assessed if the debt is not paid in full by the due date. Interest shall be charged on the outstanding balance due at the rate prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3717(a), beginning on the date that the first notice was mailed to the debtor. The debtor shall also be advised that if any portion of the debt remains unpaid for 90 days after the due date, without a repayment schedule satisfactory to the Agency being arranged, then additional penalties, as described in 31 U.S.C. 3717(e)(2), of 6 percent per year shall be charged on the unpaid balance of principal and interest.

(b) *Subsequent demands.* If the debt is not paid by the due date or if a repayment program acceptable to the ACO, has not been arranged with the debtor, then an initial demand shall be made followed by two progressively stronger written demands at not more than 30-day intervals, will be made unless a response to the initial or subsequent demands indicates that further demands would be futile and that the debtor's response does not require rebuttal.

(c) *Debts arising from contracts executed on or before October 25, 1982.* If the claim arises from a contract executed before October 25, 1982, then the initial and subsequent demands shall mention nothing about the imposition of penalties or interest, prior to rendering of judgment by a court of competent jurisdiction.

(d) *Waiver of subsequent written demands.* If there is valid reason, the sending of second and third demand letters may be waived. Such reasons may include, but are not be limited to, statute of limitations being about to run.

[49 FR 38267, Sept. 28, 1984, as amended at 53 FR 47211, Nov. 22, 1988; 57 FR 54715, Nov. 20, 1992]

§ 11.43 Collection by administrative offset.

(a) *General.* The Agency Collections Officer (ACO) or the ACO's designee

may collect debts owed to the United States by means of offsets against monies due from the United States under provisions of 31 U.S.C. 3716 and the procedures set forth below. Under provisions of 31 U.S.C. 3716(h)(1) and reciprocal agreements entered into by the Secretary of the Treasury and the States concerned, the ACO or the ACO's designee may institute administrative offsets covered in this section to collect debts that are owed to States and which arise under programs administered by FEMA. The procedures prescribed by this section shall not be used if the debtor has executed a written agreement satisfactory to the ACO or the ACO's designee for the payment of the debt so long as the debtor adheres to the provisions of the agreement. Before using the procedures of this section, the ACO or the ACO's designee shall examine the debt to determine whether the likelihood of collecting such a debt and the best interests of the United States justify the use of administrative offset. If the debt is over 6 years old but is not 10 years old, the ACO or the ACO's designee shall examine the debt and decide whether using these procedures is cost effective. Further, FEMA shall not use administrative offset procedures on debts existing for more than 10 years after the Government's right to collect the debt first accrued unless facts material to the Government's right to collect the debt were not known and could not have been known by the officials of the Government who were charged with responsibility to discover and collect the debt. FEMA may refer debts to the Department of the Treasury for Government-wide administrative offset under the provisions of 31 U.S.C. 3716(c) and for offsets against Federal tax refunds under provisions of 31 U.S.C. 3720A.

(b) *Written notice.* After the ACO or the ACO's designee has examined the debt under procedures set forth in paragraph (a) of this section, FEMA shall hand deliver or send by mail a notice to the debtor advising the debtor of:

(1) Nature and amount of the debt determined by the Agency to be due, and of intention to collect by administrative offset;

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(2) Rights available under this section;

(3) Opportunity to inspect and copy the records relating to the debt;

(4) Opportunity for review within the Agency with respect to the debt; and

(5) Opportunity to enter into an agreement with the ACO with respect to the debt. Such agreement may include voluntary but nonrevocable withholding of monies due from the United States to the debtor.

(c) *Review within the Federal Emergency Management Agency.* The debtor may request, within sixty calendar days after mailing or hand-delivery of the written notice specified in paragraph (b) of this section, review within the Agency as to the existence or amount of the debt or terms of repayment. An attorney in the Office of General Counsel, acting as an Administrative Review Official (ARO), shall conduct the review. The ARO may determine that no debt is due, that the amount of the debts should be reduced, that terms of repayment should be set, or that the demanded amount should be paid in full.

(1) If the debtor has made a timely request for a review within the Agency, then FEMA shall stay any offsets until the ARO has rendered a decision. However, interest, penalties and administrative charges, as specified in § 11.48, shall continue to accrue during the pendency of the review within the Agency. If the debtor files a request for a review within the Agency after the 60 days specified above, then FEMA shall continue with the offset action. However, if the ARO finds that the debtor owes less than the amount offset, then FEMA will refund the amount over-withheld. For purposes of determining whether the debtor has filed a timely request for administrative review, the date of FEMA's receipt of the debtor's request establishes the time of filing.

(2) The ARO shall transmit the decision on the debtor's request for review within the Agency. The ARO may contact the debtor directly to request additional information and data in order to allow the ARO to reach a knowledgeable decision. The ARO's decision shall be final insofar as FEMA's administrative processing of the debt is concerned.

(3) FEMA shall use procedures in this section to decide debtors' requests for review within FEMA under the provisions of § 11.64(d).

(d) If the debtor does not execute a written agreement, if the debtor does not request review within the Agency, or if the review within the Agency determines that a debt is due, then FEMA shall use administrative offset against monies payable by the United States in accordance with this section and appropriate regulations. However, if a statute or FEMA agreement either prohibits or explicitly provides for collection through administrative offset for the debt or the type of debt involved then the provisions of that statute or FEMA agreement rather than the provisions of this section shall be used for such offset.

(e) If the debtor has a judgment against the United States, then notice shall be provided to the General Accounting Office for offset in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3728.

(f) In addition to administrative offset remedies described above, FEMA may use its rights to collect debts by offsets conducted under principles of common law.

(g) The debtor's failure to receive notice, described in paragraph (b) of this section, mailed by FEMA to the debtor's last-known address, shall not impair the validity of offsets taken under this section.

(h) If FEMA or any other Federal department or agency incurs costs in taking offsets to collect delinquent debts, then the debtor shall be liable for such costs as administrative costs in accordance with section 11.48(d).

[63 FR 1066, Jan. 8, 1998]

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§ 11.45 Collection by salary offset.

(a) *General.* Where an individual is an employee of the Federal Government or a member of the Armed Forces or a reserve component of the Armed Forces or is receiving retired or retainer pay for service as a Federal employee and where the individual is indebted to the United States and where the individual fails to satisfy his indebtedness voluntarily after the Agency has made demands in accordance

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with § 11.42 of this part, the ACO may institute collection action by salary or pay offset procedures in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 5514, 5 CFR 550.1101 through 550.1106, 5 CFR part 845, 5 CFR 831.1301 et seq., and the procedures described below.

(b) *Notice to debtor.* At least 30 days prior to initiating salary offset, the ACO or his designee shall send notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the debtor advising him of:

(1) Nature, origin and amount of indebtedness determined by the Agency to be due, the date that the debt was due, and a statement that FEMA has complied with applicable statutes, regulations and procedures,

(2) Agency intention to initiate proceedings to collect the debt by deductions from pay,

(3) Rights available under 5 U.S.C. 5514(a),

(4) Debtor's opportunity to inspect and copy Government records relating to the debt,

(5) Opportunity to enter into a written agreement, under terms satisfactory to the ACO, to establish terms for the repayment of the debt, and

(6) Opportunity for a hearing, described in paragraph (c) of this section, concerning the existence or the amount of the debt or, if no repayment schedule has been established (in accordance with paragraph (b)(1) of this section) concerning the terms of the repayment schedule,

(7) If there is a statutory provision authorizing waiver, remission, or forgiveness of the debt due the United States; the individual will be notified as to:

(i) Nature of the provision,

(ii) Explanation of the conditions under which the waiver shall be granted,

(iii) Reasonable opportunity to request a waiver,

(iv) If waiver is requested, then a written response will be given to the request.

(c) *Hearing.* The debtor shall file a written petition for hearing or for a waiver (if applicable) on or before the twentieth calendar day after receipt of notice, referred to in paragraph (b) of this section, addressed to the Agency Collections Officer, Federal Emergency

Management Agency, Washington, DC 20472. The postmark or receipt date, if mail is not used, shall establish the date of petition.

(1) The hearing official shall be an Administrative Law Judge or a person of grade GS/GM-14 or higher, not under the supervision or control of the Director, FEMA. The Director may enter into interagency support agreements with other Federal agencies or departments for providing hearing officials.

(2) The hearing shall be informal but the debtor shall be given the basic safeguards of due process. The debtor shall have the right to be represented by an attorney. A summary record shall be made of the proceedings at the hearing. The hearing shall, insofar as possible, be conducted at a location and time convenient to the debtor.

(3) As soon as practicable, but in no event later than 60 days after the filing of the petition for hearing, the hearing official shall render a final decision. If a hearing is requested, no further action shall be taken to collect the debt until the final decision is rendered.

(d) *Amount deducted.* The amount deducted from pay for any period shall not exceed 15 percent of disposable pay. However, the debtor may voluntarily agree to the deduction of a greater amount of pay. Disposable pay means that part of pay of any individual remaining after the deduction from those earnings of any amounts required by law to be withheld. However, installment payments of less than \$25.00 will be accepted only in the most unusual circumstances. Disposable pay is defined in 5 CFR 550.1103 and 5 CFR 581.105(b) through (f).

(e) Procedural requirements specified in paragraph (c) of this section shall not be used in cases of collections of such obligations as changes in coverage under a Federal benefits program or resulting from ministerial adjustments pay and allowances which cannot be placed in effect immediately because of normal processing delays.

(f) When an employee, who is subject to salary offset in accordance with this section and who is making repayment in installments, finds that total repayment of the debt is about to be made, then the employee must notify the employee's payroll office, at least two pay

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periods before the final payment, that final payment is being made.

(g) Debts arising from travel advances provided under 5 U.S.C. 5705 and for travel and transportation expenses for transferred employees under 5 U.S.C. 5724 may be collected by taking offsets in accordance with 44 CFR 11.43.

[49 FR 38267, Sept. 28, 1984, as amended at 50 FR 40007, Oct. 1, 1985; 57 FR 54715, Nov. 20, 1992]

§ 11.46 Liquidation of collateral.

Where FEMA holds security or collateral that may be liquidated and the proceeds applied on debts due it through the exercise of a power of sale in the security instrument or a non-judicial foreclosure, such procedures should be followed if the debtor fails to pay his debt within a reasonable time after demand, unless the cost of disposing of the collateral will be disproportionate to its value or special circumstances require judicial foreclosure.

§ 11.47 Collection in installments.

Debts with accrued interest and penalties should be collected in full in one lump sum whenever this is possible. However, if the debtor is financially unable to pay the indebtedness in one lump sum, payment with applicable interest may be accepted in regular installments in accordance with a written agreement approved by the ACO or his designee. If possible, installment payments shall be sufficiently large to complete collection in the three years. Installment payments should not be less than \$50.00 per month unless there are most unusual circumstances. The Agency may require the debtor to execute a confess-judgment, negotiable note for the amount of the indebtedness. The ACO or DCO may require the debtor to provide a statement as to financial condition.

§ 11.48 Interest, penalties, and administrative charges.

(a) *Definition.* In §§11.30 through 11.65 of this part, a debt is deemed to be delinquent if the debtor has not paid the debt by the collection due date and if the debtor has not entered into a repayment agreement satisfactory to

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FEMA. A debt is also deemed delinquent if the debtor has not made payment by the date specified in the applicable agreement.

(b) *Interest.* FEMA's delinquent debtors shall be charged interest on the outstanding principal balance due on debts owed the United States at the rate published by the Secretary of the Treasury under provisions of 31 U.S.C. 3717(a). The interest rate in effect at the time that FEMA first mailed or hand delivered to the debtor written notice, stating that the debt was due and that interest would be assessed on the debt, shall be the rate applied throughout the duration of the debt until the debt is paid in full.

(1) However, if the debtor defaults on a debt repayment agreement made with the ACO or the ACO's designee, then interest shall accrue at the rate published by the Secretary of the Treasury under the provisions of 31 U.S.C. 3717(a)(1) that was in effect when the debtor defaulted on the repayment agreement. Interest shall accrue either from the date that FEMA first informed the debtor that the Agency would assess interest on the debt or some subsequent date specified in the written notice given by FEMA to the debtor stating that interest would be assessed.

(2) However, where FEMA first sent the notice of indebtedness prior to October 25, 1982, interest shall run from the date on or after that date when FEMA first sent the debtor a letter notifying the debtor that the Agency would assess interest.

(c) *Exceptions to interest charges.* However, no interest, described in paragraph (a) of this section, shall be charged if:

(1) The amount due is paid in full within 30 days of the mailing of the demand. However, the ACO or the ACO's designee, as documented by a memorandum in the debt collection file, may extend this 30-day period on a case-by-case basis for good cause shown in accordance with the Federal Claims Collection Standards (4 CFR 102.13(g)), or

(2) The applicable statute, regulation required by statute, loan agreement or contract either prohibits the charging of interest or explicitly fixes interest

or charges, which apply to the debt involved.

(d) *Penalty charges.* Except in the situation described in paragraph (c) of this section, the debtor shall be liable for a penalty of 6% annually on the unpaid principal, interest, and administrative charges if the debtor fails to pay the debt in full within 90 days of the date after the first written notice by FEMA that FEMA would assess penalty charges. However, if the debtor enters into a repayment agreement, satisfactory to the ACO or the ACO's designee within the 90-day period, then FEMA will not assess penalty so long as the debtor adheres to the provisions of the agreement. Penalty shall accrue starting on and including the day of FEMA's first written notice where FEMA mentioned that it would assess penalty charges on the debt. Penalty will not be assessed against Federal agencies. Penalty charges shall accrue on administrative charges, starting on the day that FEMA incurred the administrative charge. However, if the debtor pays the debt in full within 90 days of FEMA's first notice that the Agency would assess penalty charges or if the debtor enters into a repayment agreement satisfactory to the ACO or the ACO's designee within that time, then FEMA will not assess penalty on accrued administrative charges.

(e) *Administrative costs for processing delinquent debts.* Debtors shall pay the United States for costs incurred by the Government in collecting the debt in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3717(e)(1). Administrative cost calculations will be based upon actual costs incurred by FEMA or upon analyses establishing an average of actual costs incurred by FEMA in processing debts in similar stages of delinquency.

(f) *Standards for waiver of interest, penalties, and administrative charges.* (1) The ACO or the ACO's designee may waive interest, penalties and administrative charges, either in whole or in part, if the ACO or the ACO's designee finds that:

(i) The debtor is financially unable to pay;

(ii) The Agency's enforcement policy will be adequately served if there is a waiver in whole or in part;

(iii) The debtor has shown good cause, satisfactory to the ACO, that the claim was not timely paid. If waiver is granted, the administrative claims file shall be adequately documented; or

(iv) The ACO or the ACO's designee may waive imposition of interest in accordance with standards set forth in 4 CFR 102.13 and §§ 11.50 and 11.51 of this subpart.

(2) The ACO, with the concurrence of the General Counsel, may waive interest, penalties and administrative costs based on criteria set forth in paragraphs (f)(3) through (f)(5) of this section. When such charges are waived, the Agency Collections Officer or the ACO's designee shall prepare a memorandum for the debt collection file stating the reasons for not collecting such charges.

(3) If the costs of collection exceed the projected recovery then interest, penalties and administrative costs may be waived.

(4) If FEMA determines that the debtor is unable to pay, as shown by complete and sworn statements as to his or her assets and projected income, then the ACO or the ACO's designee may waive interest, penalties and administrative charges in whole or in part. If the principal outstanding amount of the debt exceeds \$5,000, the determination shall be made by the ACO. If the principal outstanding amount of the debt is \$5,000 or less, the determination may be made by the DCO, the ACO, or a person designated by the ACO.

(5) The ACO or the ACO's designee may waive assessing interest, penalty, and administrative charges if such assessment would be against equity and good conscience or not in the best interests of the United States. Examples include, but are not limited to:

(i) FEMA's undue delay in rendering a decision where the debtor had requested an administrative review or review within the Agency. Under these circumstances, interest and penalty would be waived during the period of undue delay.

(ii) The amount of interest is so large, in relation to the debtor's ability to pay that assessment of interest

would leave the debtor perpetually indebted to the United States.

(g) *Nonapplicability.* The provisions of this section do not apply to debts owed by Federal agencies.

(h) *Installment collections or partial payments.* When a debtor pays a debt either partially or in installments, the payments shall first be applied to administrative costs, second to penalty charges, third to accrued interest, and finally to principal. Partial payments shall be deemed to be made when received at the FEMA office designated to receive the payments. If the debtor owes more than one debt, then the ACO or the ACO's designee will apply the partial payment to the oldest debt first unless the debtor is making a voluntary installment payment. Under voluntary circumstances, the debtor may designate to which debt the payment is to be applied.

(i) *Collection of interest, penalties, and administrative charges while an appeal is pending.* If the debtor requests administrative review of the existence or the amount of the debt, interest, penalties, and administrative charges may be waived or suspended by the ACO or the ACO's designee under the following circumstances:

(1) If a State or local government requests review within the Agency of a proposed referral to the Treasury Offset Program or an administrative review of a proposed administrative offset, then the ACO or the ACO's designee may waive interest, penalty or administrative charges if the State or local government shows to the satisfaction of the ACO or the ACO's designee that its taxes and other revenues would be insufficient to allow the State or local government to provide essential public services if FEMA were to collect interest, penalty, administrative charges, or any two or more, either in whole or in part. The ACO or the ACO's designee may require that the State or local government provide FEMA with such economic, accounting, financial or demographic data as the ACO or the ACO's designee may deem necessary to reach an informed decision as to waiver.

(2) If a debtor notes an appeal or requests an administrative review that is mandated by law, then FEMA shall not

assess interest and penalties while the appeal is pending from the time that the debtor requests an administrative review or an appeal until the Agency has taken final action on the administrative review or the appeal.

(3) When a debtor notes an appeal or requests an administrative review that is permissive under statute or regulation, then interest, penalties and administrative charges may be waived if:

(i) There is no fault or lack of good faith on the part of the debtor and if the amount of interest, penalties and administrative charges is so high in relation to affordable installment repayments that the debt would never be repaid. In determining whether interest and penalties should be waived, the ACO, the ACO's designee, or the DCO may demand that the debtor provide such financial data as he or she may determine is necessary to reach an informed decision.

(ii) FEMA unreasonably delays in rendering a decision on a debtor's request for an administrative review or review within the Agency, then the ACO or the ACO's designee may waive assessment of interest, penalty, and administrative charge during the period of the unreasonable delay.

(iii) The ACO or the ACO's designee may waive or suspend the collection of interest, penalty and administrative charges, for good cause shown and if such waiver or suspension would serve FEMA's interests. The FEMA official making such a waiver shall prepare a memorandum describing the circumstances and stating the reasons for the grant of a waiver or suspension.

(j) *Accrual of interest and penalty.* Interest and penalty will accrue on delinquent FEMA debts until FEMA receives payment at the address designated by the ACO or the ACO's designee.

[63 FR 1067, Jan. 8, 1998]

§ 11.49 Omission not a defense.

Failure to comply with any standard prescribed in 4 CFR chapter 11, or in this subpart shall not be available as a defense to any debtor.

§ 11.50 Standards for compromise of debts.

(a) *Compromise.* (1) A debt may be compromised if:

(i) The debtor is not able to pay the full amount within a reasonable period of time;

(ii) If the debtor refuses to pay the debt in full and the Agency is unable to enforce collection within a reasonable time by enforced collection proceeding;

(iii) If there is real doubt concerning the Agency's ability to prove its case in court for the full amount claimed;

(iv) If the cost of collecting the debt does not justify the enforced collection of the full amount;

(v) If, in connection with statutory penalties or forfeitures established as an aid to enforcement and to compel compliance, the Agency's enforcement policy will be adequately served by acceptance of the sum to be agreed upon; or

(vi) For other reasons deemed valid by the ACO after consultation with the General Counsel. The Standards set forth in 4 CFR 103.3 through 103.9 should be used.

(2) *Inability to pay.* If a debtor is unable to pay the full amount of the debt within a reasonable time or if the debtor refuses to pay and the Government is unable to collect the amount of the debt through enforcement proceedings then the Agency may compromise the claim either in whole or in part. The ACO may require that the debtor provide sworn information as to assets, actual or potential sources of income, liabilities and other financial data. The standards set forth in the GAO, Department of Justice guidelines prescribed in 4 CFR 103.2 should be used.

(3) Compromises payable in installments will not normally be permitted by the Agency only if the debtor shows that full, immediate payment is impossible.

(4) *Litigative probabilities.* If there is a *bona fide* dispute as to facts or if there is a valid legal defense raised which may limit or eliminate the possibility of recovery, then the Agency Collections Officer may, after receiving a legal analysis from the General Counsel, compromise the action in whole or in part.

(b) *Documentary evidence of compromise.* No compromise of a debt shall be final or binding on the Agency unless it is in writing and signed by the appropriate officer who has authority to compromise the claim pursuant to this subpart.

(c) *Authority.* Only the ACO may compromise debts of more than \$2,500. Debts of \$2,500 or less may be compromised by the ACO or the DCO. Debts exceeding \$100,000 or such other limit prescribed by the Attorney General in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(a)(2) may be compromised only after approval by the Department of Justice in accordance with 4 CFR 103.1(b).

[49 FR 38267, Sept. 28, 1984, as amended at 53 FR 47212, Nov. 22, 1988; 57 FR 54715, Nov. 20, 1992]

§ 11.51 Standards for suspension or termination of collection.

(a) *Suspension of collection action.* (1) Collection action shall be suspended temporarily on a debt when the debtor cannot be located after diligent effort but there is reason to believe that future collection action may be sufficiently productive to justify periodic review and action on the claim, making consideration for its size and the amount which may be realized. Collection action may be suspended temporarily on a debt when the debtor owns no substantial equity in realty and is presently unable to make payment on the Agency's debt or effect a compromise, but his future prospects justify retention of the claim for periodic review and action, and, (i) the applicable statute of limitations has been tolled or started anew, or (ii) future collection can be effected by offset notwithstanding the statute of limitations. Suspension as to a particular debtor should not defer the early liquidation of security for the debt. Standards prescribed in 4 CFR part 104 shall be used in making determinations as to suspension as termination of collection efforts.

(2) *No substantial recovery possible.* If, at the time that collection is attempted, debtor is without assets or actual or potential income or if the debtor may have exemptions under the bankruptcy laws which make enforced

collection of the debt not cost-effective, then collection action may be suspended. However, interest and other charges will accumulate unless waived.

(3) *Debtor cannot be located.* If the debtor cannot be located or is outside the United States, then collection action may be suspended until the debtor is located. The statute of limitations will be tolled during those periods that the debtor is outside the United States.

(b) *Termination of collection action.* (1) Collection action may be terminated and the Agency file closed for the following reasons: (i) No substantial amount can be collected; (ii) the debtor cannot be located; (iii) the cost will exceed recovery; (iv) the claim is legally without merit; or (v) the claim cannot be substantiated by evidence.

(2) *No substantial recovery possible.* If there is little likelihood that collection efforts will result in any substantial recovery, then collection efforts may be terminated. Costs of recovery may be a factor in determining whether any recovery would be substantial. Normally, costs of recovery would be more important in cases of small debts than in cases of large ones.

(3) *Debtor cannot be located.* Every effort, including, but not limited to, use of governmental records, Internal Revenue Service taxpayer information, private contractor skip tracer and credit agencies, shall be made to locate debtors in advance of the running of the statute of limitations. If the debtor cannot be located, then the Agency Collections Officer may determine, with the concurrence of the General Counsel, that collection efforts may be terminated.

(4) *Litigative possibilities.* The criteria and procedures of § 11.50(a)(4) of this subpart may be used to terminate collection efforts if it appears unlikely that the Government would prevail if it were to litigate collection of the debt.

(c) *Debts exceeding \$100,000.* Debts exceeding \$100,000 or higher limits prescribed by the Attorney General in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(a)(2) (exclusive of interest, penalty charges and administrative charges) shall not be compromised by FEMA unless the proposed compromise has been referred for approval by the Department of Justice

in accordance with 4 CFR 104.1(b). Such proposed compromises shall be referred to the Office of General Counsel, which shall review the proposal before being forwarded to the Department of Justice. However, where a debt claim is of no legal merit, the ACO may compromise such a debt without referral to the Department of Justice but only with the concurrence of the Office of General Counsel.

(d) *Enforcement policy.* Statutory penalties and forfeitures are used as an aid to secure compliance with FEMA requirements and to compel payment. These may be waived if the Agency's enforcement policy in terms of securing payment and securing compliance with FEMA regulations would be served by accepting a sum agreed upon. Mere accidental or technical violations will be dealt with less severely than willful or substantial violations.

[49 FR 38267, Sept. 28, 1984, as amended at 53 FR 47212, Nov. 22, 1988; 57 FR 54715, Nov. 20, 1992]

§ 11.52 Referral of delinquent debtors to consumer reporting agencies.

(a) *General.* This section implements 31 U.S.C. 3711(f) concerning reporting of debtors having overdue debts to consumer reporting agencies.

(b) *Procedures.* When a debt is unpaid for 120 days after the initial demand letter has been sent and where the debtor has not repaid the amount due nor has the debtor entered into an agreement for repayment satisfactory to the ACO or his designee, or the debt is not subject to administrative offset (as described in § 11.43), the ACO may report the claim to consumer reporting agencies if:

(1) The Agency Collections Officer or his designee has determined that the debt is overdue,

(2) Notice has been sent certified mail, return receipt requested, to debtor informing him that:

(i) Payment of the debt is overdue,
(ii) The Agency intends to disclose the debtor's debt records to a consumer reporting agency within a stated period, not less than 60 days after the mailing of such debt,

(iii) Specified items of information being released shall be listed in the notice. Such items will normally include

the debtor's name, taxpayer account number, last known address, other information necessary to establish the identity of the individual, the nature, amount and status of the outstanding claim, and programs under which the claim arose, and

(iv) The debtor has a right to a full explanation of the debt, to dispute any information in the records concerning the debt, and to have an administrative review. If the debtor petitions for administrative review, then no further action on referring debtor information to consumer reporting agencies shall be undertaken until the administrative review is completed.

(c) *Administrative review.* The debtor shall send with his petition arguments in writing and documentary evidence to the Agency Collection Officer, Office of Financial Management, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington, DC 20472. These shall be reviewed by the ACO or an official designated by him. The reviewing official shall prepare a reply, within 60 days after receipt of the petition, either accepting the debtor's assertions in whole or in part or rejecting them. If the debtor's assertions are rejected in whole or in part, then the debt data, described in paragraph (b)(2)(iii) of this section (with correction made as indicated by the reviewing official) shall be sent to consumer reporting agencies.

(d) *Information released.* Information released to consumer reporting agencies shall be limited to the following items:

- (1) Name of debtor, address, taxpayer identification number, and other information necessary to establish the identity of the debtor,
- (2) Amount, status and history of the debt and
- (3) Program under which the debt arose.

[49 FR 38267, Sept. 28, 1984, as amended at 57 FR 54715, Nov. 20, 1992]

§ 11.53 Securing debtor addresses from the Department of Treasury.

(a) If the ACO is unable to obtain a current address for the debtor, then a written request shall be sent to the Secretary of the Treasury asking for the debtor's most current mailing address from the Department of the

Treasury taxpayer identity information files for Agency use in collecting claims. Any information so received from the Secretary of the Treasury shall be safeguarded in accordance with provisions of 26 U.S.C. 6103(p)(4) and 26 CFR parts 301 and 601.

(b) Taxpayer identity information (which includes IRS current address and social security number) shall be released to consumer reporting agencies only for the purpose of preparation of commercial credit reports for use by Federal agencies in accordance with section 3 of the Debt Collection Act (31 U.S.C. 3711(f)). A notice to this effect shall be placed on each page containing taxpayer identity information which is sent to consumer reporting agencies.

§ 11.54 Contracts with debt collection agencies.

(a) *General.* FEMA shall utilize mandatory, government-wide debt collection agency contracts negotiated by the General Services Administration or the Department of the Treasury to effect collection of debts owed FEMA.

(b) *Debt collection contract provisions.* Contracts entered into under authority of this section shall have provisions relating to:

- (1) Protection of data relating to individuals which shall not be less than that provided under the terms of the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a).
- (2) Protection of data derived from Department of the Treasury taxpayer identity information files shall in accordance with 26 U.S.C. 6103(p)(4) and 26 CFR parts 301 and 601.
- (3) Authority to terminate collection action, settle or compromise claims shall remain with the Director of the Agency or the ACO rather than with the Contracting Officer.
- (4) Resolution of disputes relating to the claim shall remain with the ACO or the Agency Director. Resolution of disputes arising under the contract or with the contractor shall remain with the Agency Contracting Officer who shall handle such disputes in accordance with the Contract Disputes Act (Pub. L. 95-563).
- (5) Judicial enforcement of the claim shall be handled by the U.S. Department of Justice.

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(6) The contractor shall adhere to Federal and State laws and regulations pertaining to debt collection practices including the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (15 U.S.C. 1692 *et seq.*)

(7) Contracts, entered into under provisions of this section, shall be subject to competition to the maximum practicable extent.

(8) The contractor shall be required to strictly account for all amounts collected.

(c) *Collection fees.* Contracts entered into under this section may provide that fees payable to the contractor may be paid only from the amounts collected from the debtor as determined by the Contracting Officer. However, such contracts shall be funded only from funds available for the time period in which the contract is executed.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3067-0122)

[49 FR 38267, Sept. 28, 1984; 50 FR 40007, Oct. 1, 1985; 50 FR 42023, Oct. 17, 1985; 51 FR 34605, Sept. 30, 1986; 53 FR 47212, Nov. 22, 1988]

§ 11.55 Referral to GAO or Justice Department.

(a) *Referral to the Department of Justice.* With the exception of debts described in paragraph (b), of this section, those debts which cannot be collected or compromised or terminated in accordance with 3 CFR parts 103 and 104 and §§11.50 and 11.51, shall be referred to the Department of Justice for collection action. All such referrals shall be done by the ACO, who shall consult with the FEMA Office of General Counsel. The referral shall be accompanied by a copy of the complete debt collection file. In addition, the following information shall be provided:

(1) Current address of debtor. Effort shall be made to locate the debtor if he is missing. If the debtor is a corporation, then the name and address of the agent upon whom service of process may be made, shall be provided.

(2) Credit data which may be in the form of a credit report or a statement, under oath, of the debtor's assets and liabilities.

(3) History of prior collection actions.

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(4) Data required by the GAO Claims Collection Litigation Report form. If the debt is less than \$600, exclusive of interest, then referral shall not be made to the Department of Justice, except in unusual cases.

(b) *Referral to the General Accounting Office.* Debts arising from audits exceptions taken by the General Accounting Office (GAO) shall be referred to GAO before referring such debts to the Department of Justice. If the merits of the debt or the propriety of a proposed compromise, suspension or termination are in doubt, then the matter should be referred to GAO prior to referral to the Department of Justice.

(c) *Prompt referral.* Such referrals shall be made as early as possible consistent with aggressive collection action, and, in any event, well within the statute of limitation for bringing suit against the debtor. Ordinarily, debt collection referrals will be made to the Department of Justice within six months after FEMA has determined that a debt is owing in an amount certain.

§ 11.56 Analysis of costs.

The ACO shall provide for periodic comparison of costs incurred and amounts collected. Data on costs and corresponding recovery rates for debts of different types and in various dollar ranges should be used to compare the cost effectiveness of alternative collection techniques, establish guidelines with respect to the points at which costs of further collection efforts are likely to exceed recoveries, assist in evaluating offers in compromise, and establish minimum debt amounts below which collection efforts need not be taken. Cost and recovery data should also be useful in justifying adequate resources for an effective collection action.

§ 11.57 Automation.

The ACO shall work to automate the Agency's debt collection operations to the extent that it is cost effective and feasible.

§ 11.58 Prevention of overpayments, delinquencies, and defaults.

The ACO shall establish procedures to identify the causes of overpayments,

delinquencies, and defaults and the corrective actions needed. All debts or loans, when first established, may be reported to commercial credit bureaus.

§ 11.59 Office of General Counsel.

The Office of General Counsel shall provide legal advice on claims collection matters to all debt collection officers and the Agency Collection Officer, as needed.

§ 11.60 Sale of debts due the United States arising under programs administered by the Agency.

Where debts due the United States arising under programs administered by the Agency prove to be uncollectable or unresolvable through procedures described in §§ 11.33 through 11.35, 11.41 through 11.48, and 11.50 through 11.55 and where the stated value of the debt is less than \$100,000 or such higher limit prescribed by the Attorney General in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(a)(2), excluding penalties and interest, then the Agency may contract to sell or assign such debts under competitive sales procedures. The Agency may sell or assign debts valued at \$600, or less, excluding penalties and interest, after decision by the ACO. Where the debt exceeds \$600, but is less than \$100,000 or such higher limit prescribed by the Attorney General in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3711(a)(2), exclusive of interest and penalties, the Agency may sell or assign such debts only after the ACO has coordinated such action with the Department of Justice and the General Accounting Office.

[49 FR 38267, Sept. 28, 1984, as amended at 57 FR 54715, Nov. 20, 1992]

§ 11.61 Referral of delinquent debts to Department of the Treasury for offsets against tax refunds.

(a) FEMA may refer delinquent debts to the Department of the Treasury for offset against tax refunds in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3720A and that Department's implementing regulations.

(b) FEMA will provide information to the Department of the Treasury within time limits prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury or his or her designee and in accordance with agreements entered into between FEMA and the De-

partment of the Treasury and its constituent agencies.

(1) Information submitted to the Department of the Treasury shall include a description of:

(i) The size and age of FEMA's inventory of delinquent debts; and

(ii) The prior collection efforts that the inventory reflects; and

(2) In accordance with time limits and record transmission requirements established by the Department of the Treasury or its constituent agencies, FEMA may submit magnetic media containing information on debtors being referred to that Department for tax refund offset. FEMA may use the electronic data transmissions facilities of other federal agencies in transmitting data on debtors or for referral of debts to the Department of the Treasury.

(c) FEMA shall establish a collect-call or toll-free telephone number that the Department of the Treasury or its constituent agencies will furnish to debtors whose refunds have been offset to obtain information from FEMA concerning the offsets taken.

(d) Tax refund offset procedures described in §§ 11.61 through 11.64 shall apply to debts owed to the United States that are past-due and legally enforceable, and

(1) Except in the case of a judgment debt, the debt has been delinquent for at least three months but has not been delinquent for more than ten years at the time the offset is made; and

(2) Where FEMA has given the debtor at least 60 days from the date of mailing of the notification (described in § 11.63 of this part) to request a review within FEMA and to present evidence that all or part of the debt is not past-due or legally enforceable. If the debtor has requested a review and presented evidence, then FEMA has considered the debtor's evidence and reasons and has determined that all or a part of the debt is past-due and legally enforceable; and

(3) With respect to which FEMA has notified or has made a reasonable attempt to notify the debtor that the debt is past-due and, unless repaid within 60 days of the mailing of the notification the debt will be referred to

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the Department of the Treasury for offset against any overpayment of tax; and

(4) Is at least \$25.00; and

(5) Meets all other requirements of 31 U.S.C. 3720A and the Department of the Treasury regulations relating to the eligibility of a debt for tax refund offset have been satisfied.

[63 FR 1068, Jan. 8, 1998]

§ 11.62 Administrative charges incurred in referrals for tax refund offset.

In accordance with § 11.48(e), all administrative costs incurred in connection with the referral of the debts to the Department of the Treasury for collection by tax refund offset shall be added to the amount owed by the debtor. Such costs will include, but not be limited to, a pro-rata share of total costs of taking offsets incurred by the Department of the Treasury in accordance with agreements executed by FEMA, the Department of the Treasury and the Department's constituent agencies.

[63 FR 1069, Jan. 8, 1998]

§ 11.63 Notice to debtor before tax refund offset.

(a) FEMA will refer a debt to the Department of the Treasury for tax refund offset only after FEMA:

(1) Makes a determination that the debt is owed to the United States;

(2) Sends the debtor a notice of FEMA's intent to use Department of the Treasury tax refund offset that provides the debtor with items of information described in paragraphs (a)(2)(i) through (vii) as follows:

(i) Debtor owes FEMA an amount due; and

(ii) The debt is past due; and

(iii) Unless the debt is repaid within 60 days of the date of FEMA's mailing the notice of intent described above, FEMA intends to collect the debt by requesting the Department of the Treasury to take offset to reduce the debtor's federal tax refund by the amount of the principal amount of the debt and all accumulated interest, penalty, and other charges; and

(iv) Debtor has an opportunity to present arguments and evidence within 60 days of mailing of the notice of in-

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tent that all or a part of the debt is not due. A debtor requesting a review within the Agency shall send these arguments to the FEMA office that sent the notice of intent under § 11.63(a)(2); and

(v) Debtor has had an opportunity to arrange to inspect and copy records relating to the debt by mailing a request to the FEMA office sending the notice of intent under § 11.63(a)(2); and

(vi) If no reply is received from the debtor within 60 days of mailing of the notice, FEMA may refer the debt to the U.S. Department of the Treasury after reviewing the file and determining that the debt is due; and

(vii) Debtor may negotiate a repayment agreement, satisfactory to FEMA, for the repayment of the debt.

(b) If the debtor has presented evidence and arguments as described in subsection (a)(2)(iv) FEMA will refer the debt to the Department of the Treasury only after the FEMA Office of General Counsel has rendered a decision under provisions of §§ 11.64 and 11.65 of this subpart concerning the debtor's arguments and evidence, if any, and has determined that the debt is due either in whole or in part. If the debtor has submitted evidence in accordance with paragraph (a)(2)(iv)(g) of this section, the FEMA Office of General Counsel shall notify the debtor of the Agency's final determination.

(c) If the debtor has questions concerning the debt or procedures being used, the debtor may contact FEMA at an address and telephone number provided in the notice of intent under § 11.63(a)(2).

[63 FR 1069, Jan. 8, 1998]

§ 11.64 Review within Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(a) *Notification by debtor.* A debtor receiving notice of intent under § 11.63(a)(2) has the right to present evidence and arguments within 60 days of mailing of the notice of intent that all of the debt is not past-due or not legally enforceable. To exercise this right, the debtor must:

(1) Send a written request for review of evidence to the FEMA office sending the notice of intent; and

(2) State in the request the amount disputed and the reasons why the debtor believes that the debt is not past due or is not legally enforceable; and

(3) Include in the request any documents that the debtor wishes to be considered, or state that additional information will be submitted within the remainder of the 60-day period. FEMA is not obligated to consider any of debtor's evidence received after the 60-day period, except as specified in paragraph (c) of this section.

(b) *Submission of evidence.* The debtor may submit evidence that all or part of the debt is not past due or legally enforceable along with the notification required by paragraph (a) of this section. Debtor's failure to submit the notification and evidence within the 60-day period may result in FEMA's referral of the debt to the Department of the Treasury with only a review by the ACO or the ACO's designee that FEMA's records show that the debt is actually due FEMA.

(c) *Late filed requests for review within FEMA.* If the debtor submits a request for review after the 60-day time limit in paragraph (a) of this section, FEMA shall render a decision as described in paragraph (d) of this section, but FEMA shall not stay offset action as described in § 11.65. However, if FEMA, after the review of the debtor's evidence and arguments, determines that the debtor owes less than the amounts that FEMA has taken through offset, then FEMA shall refund any difference between any amounts offset and amounts that the review within the Agency determines is actually owed.

(d) *Review of the evidence.* FEMA will review the debtor's arguments and evidence in accordance with procedures set forth in § 11.43(c).

[63 FR 1069, Jan. 8, 1998]

§ 11.65 Stay of tax refund offset action.

If the debtor notifies FEMA that the debtor is exercising rights described in § 11.64 and submits evidence within time limits specified in § 11.64, any notice to the Department of the Treasury concerning tax refund offset will be stayed until the issuance of a written decision that sustains, amends, or ends collection action resulting from

FEMA's original debt collection decision.

[63 FR 1069, Jan. 8, 1998]

Subpart D—Personnel Claims Regulations

AUTHORITY: 31 U.S.C. 3721.

SOURCE: 50 FR 8112, Feb. 28, 1985, unless otherwise noted.

§ 11.70 Scope and purpose.

(a) The Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is authorized by 31 U.S.C. 3721 to settle and pay (including replacement in kind) claims of officers and employees of FEMA, amounting to not more than \$25,000 for damage to or loss of personal property incident to their service. Property may be replaced in-kind at the option of the Government. Claims are payable only for such types, quantities, or amounts of tangible personal property (including money) as the approving authority shall determine to be reasonable, useful, or proper under the circumstances existing at the time and place of the loss. In determining what is reasonable, useful, or proper, the approving authority will consider the type and quantity of property involved, circumstances attending acquisition and use of the property, and whether possession or use by the claimant at the time of damage or loss was incident to service.

(b) The Government does not underwrite all personal property losses that a claimant may sustain and it does not underwrite individual tastes. While the Government does not attempt to limit possession of property by an individual, payment for damage or loss is made only to the extent that the possession of the property is determined to be reasonable, useful, or proper. If individuals possess excessive quantities of items, or expensive items, they should have such property privately insured. Failure of the claimant to comply with these procedures may reduce or preclude payment of the claim under this subpart.

§ 11.71 Claimants.

(a) A claim pursuant to this subpart may only be made by: (1) An employee

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of FEMA; (2) a former employee of FEMA whose claim arises out of an incident occurring before his/her separation from FEMA; (3) survivors of a person named in paragraph (a) (1) or (2) of this section, in the following order of precedence: (i) Spouse; (ii) children; (iii) father or mother, or both or (iv) brothers or sisters, or both; (4) the authorized agent or legal representative of a person named in paragraphs (a) (1), (2), and (3) of this section.

(b) A claim may not be presented by or for the benefit of a subrogee, assignee, conditional vendor, or other third party.

§ 11.72 Time limitations.

(a) A claim under this part may be allowed only if it is in writing, specifies a sum certain and is received in the Office of General Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington, DC 20472: (1) Within 2 years after it accrues; (2) or if it cannot be filed within the time limits of paragraph (a)(1) of this section because it accrues in time of war or in time of armed conflict in which any armed force of the United States is engaged or if such a war or armed conflict intervenes within 2 years after the claim accrues, when the claimant shows good cause, the claim may be filed within 2 years after the cause ceases to exist but not more than 2 years after termination of the war or armed conflict.

(b) For purposes of this subpart, a claim accrues at the time of the accident or incident causing the loss or damage, or at such time as the loss or damage should have been discovered by the claimant by the exercise of due diligence.

§ 11.73 Allowable claims.

(a) A claim may be allowed only if: (1) The damage or loss was not caused wholly or partly by the negligent or wrongful act of the claimant, his/her agent, the members of his/her family, or his/her private employee (the standard to be applied is that of reasonable care under the circumstances); and (2) the possession of the property lost or damaged and the quantity possessed is determined to have been reasonable, useful, or proper under the circumstances; and (3) the claim is sub-

stantiated by proper and convincing evidence.

(b) Claims which are otherwise allowable under this subpart shall not be disallowed solely because the property was not in the possession of the claimant at the time of the damage or loss, or solely because the claimant was not the legal owner of the property for which the claim is made. For example, borrowed property may be the subject of a claim.

(c) Subject to the conditions in paragraph (a) of this section, and the other provisions of this subpart, any claim for damage to, or loss of, personal property incident to service with FEMA may be considered and allowed. The following are examples of the principal types of claims which may be allowed, unless excluded by § 11.74.

(1) *Property loss or damage in quarters or other authorized places.* Claims may be allowed for damage to, or loss of, property arising from fire, flood, hurricane, other natural disaster, theft, or other unusual occurrence, while such property is located at:

(i) Quarters within the 50 states or the District of Columbia that were assigned to the claimant or otherwise provided in-kind by the United States; or

(ii) Any warehouse, office, working area, or other place (except quarters) authorized for the reception or storage of property.

(2) *Transportation or travel losses.* Claims may be allowed for damage to, or loss of, property incident to transportation or storage pursuant to orders, or in connection with travel under orders, including property in the custody of a carrier, an agent or agency of the Government, or the claimant.

(3) *Motor vehicles.* Claims may be allowed for automobiles and other motor vehicles damaged or lost by overseas shipments provided by the Government. "Shipments provided by the Government" means via Government vessels, charter of commercial vessels, or by Government bills of lading on commercial vessels, and includes storage, unloading, and offloading incident thereto. Other claims for damage to or loss of automobiles and other major vehicles may be allowed when use of the vehicles on a nonreimbursable basis

was required by the claimant's supervisor, but these claims shall be limited to a maximum of \$1,000.00.

(4) *Mobile homes.* Claims may be allowed for damage to or loss of mobile homes and their content under the provisions of paragraph (c)(2) of this section. Claims for structural damage to mobile homes resulting from such structural damage must contain conclusive evidence that the damage was not caused by structural deficiency of the mobile home and that it was not overloaded. Claims for damage to or loss of tires mounted on mobile homes may be allowed only in cases of collision, theft, or vandalism.

(5) *Money.* Claims for money in an amount that is determined to be reasonable for the claimant to possess at the time of the loss are payable:

(i) Where personal funds were accepted by responsible Government personnel with apparent authority to receive them for safekeeping, deposit, transmittal, or other authorized disposition, but were neither applied as directed by the owner nor returned;

(ii) When lost incident to a marine or aircraft disaster;

(iii) When lost by fire, flood, hurricane, or other natural disaster;

(iv) When stolen from the quarters of the claimant where it is conclusively shown that the money was in a locked container and that the quarters themselves were locked. Exceptions to the foregoing "double lock" rule are permitted when the adjudicating authority determines that the theft loss was not caused wholly or partly by the negligent or wrongful act of the claimant, their agent, or their employee. The adjudicating authority should use the test of whether the claimant did their best under the circumstances to protect the property; or

(v) When taken by force from the claimant's person.

(6) *Clothing.* Claims may be allowed for clothing and accessories customarily worn on the person which are damaged or lost:

(i) During the performance of official duties in an unusual or extraordinary-risk situation;

(ii) In cases involving emergency action required by natural disaster such

as fire, flood, hurricane, or by enemy or other belligerent action;

(iii) In cases involving faulty equipment or defective furniture maintained by the Government and used by the claimant required by the job situation; or

(iv) When using a motor vehicle.

(7) *Property used for benefit of the Government.* Claims may be allowed for damage to or loss of property (except motor vehicles, see §§11.73(c)(3) and 11.74(b)(13)) used for the benefit of the Government at the request of, or with the knowledge and consent of, superior authority or by reason of necessity.

(8) *Enemy action or public service.* Claims may be allowed for damage to or loss of property as a direct consequence of:

(i) Enemy action or threat thereof, or combat, guerrilla, brigandage, or other belligerent activity, or unjust confiscation by a foreign power or its nation;

(ii) Action by the claimant to quiet a civil disturbance or to alleviate a public disaster; or

(iii) Efforts by the claimant to save human life or Government property.

(9) *Marine or aircraft disaster.* Claims may be allowed for personal property damaged or lost as a result of marine or aircraft disaster or accident.

(10) *Government property.* Claims may be allowed for property owned by the United States only when the claimant is financially responsible to an agency of the Government other than FEMA.

(11) *Borrowed property.* Claims may be allowed for borrowed property that has been damaged or lost.

(12)(i) A claim against the Government may be made for not more than \$40,000 by an officer or employee of the agency for damage to, or loss of, personal property in a foreign country that was incurred incident to service, and—

(A) The officer, or employee was evacuated from the country on a recommendation or order of the Secretary of State or other competent authority that was made in responding to an incident of political unrest or hostile act by people in that country; and the damage or loss resulted from the evacuation, incident, or hostile act; or

(B) The damage or loss resulted from a hostile act directed against the Government or its officers, or employees.

(ii) On paying the claim under this section, the Government is subrogated for the amount of the payment to a right or claim that the claimant may have against the foreign country for the damage or loss for which the Government made the payment.

(iii) Amounts may be obligated or expended for claims under this section only to the extent provided in advance in appropriation laws.

§ 11.74 Claims not allowed.

(a) A claim is not allowable if:

(1) The damage or loss was caused wholly or partly by the negligent or wrongful act of the claimant, claimant's agent, claimant's employee, or a member of claimant's family;

(2) The damage or loss occurred in quarters occupied by the claimant within the 50 states and the District of Columbia that were not assigned to the claimant or otherwise provided in-kind by the United States;

(3) Possession of the property lost or damaged was not incident to service or not reasonable or proper under the circumstances.

(b) In addition to claims falling within the categories of paragraph (a) of this section, the following are examples of claims which are not payable:

(1) *Claims not incident to service.* Claims which arose during the conduct of personal business are not payable.

(2) *Subrogation claims.* Claims based upon payment or other consideration to a proper claimant are not payable.

(3) *Assigned claims.* Claims based upon assignment of a claim by a proper claimant are not payable.

(4) *Conditional vendor claims.* Claims asserted by or on behalf of a conditional vendor are not payable.

(5) *Claims by improper claimants.* Claims by persons not designated in § 11.71 are not payable.

(6) *Articles of extraordinary value.* Claims are not payable for valuable or expensive articles, such as cameras, watches, jewelry, furs, or other articles of extraordinary value, when shipped with household goods or as unaccompanied baggage (shipment includes storage). This prohibition does not

apply to articles in the personal custody of the claimant or articles properly checked, provided that reasonable protection or security measures have been taken, by the claimant.

(7) *Articles acquired for other persons.* Claims are not payable for articles intended directly or indirectly for persons other than the claimant or members of the claimants' immediate household. This prohibition includes articles acquired at the request of others and articles for sale.

(8) *Property used for business.* Claims are not payable for property normally used for business or profit.

(9) *Unserviceable property.* Claims are not payable for wornout or unserviceable property.

(10) *Violation of law or directive.* Claims are not payable for property acquired, possessed, or transported in violation of law, regulation, or other directive. This does not apply to limitation imposed on the weight of shipments of household goods.

(11) *Intangible property.* Claims are not payable for intangible property such as bank books, checks, promissory notes, stock certificates, bonds, bills of lading, warehouse receipts, baggage checks, insurance policies, money orders, and traveler's checks.

(12) *Government property.* Claims are not payable for property owned by the United States unless the claimant is financially responsible for the property to an agency of the Government other than FEMA.

(13) *Motor vehicles.* Claims for motor vehicles, except as provided for by § 11.73(c)(3), will ordinarily not be paid. However, in exceptional cases, meritorious claims for damage to or loss of motor vehicles, limited to a maximum of \$1,000.00, may be recommended to the Office of General Counsel for consideration and approval for payment.

(14) *Enemy property.* Claims are not payable for enemy property, including war trophies.

(15) *Losses recoverable from carrier, insurer or contractor.* Claims are not payable for losses, or any portion thereof, which have been recovered or are recoverable from a carrier, insurer or under contract except as permitted under § 11.75.

(16) *Fees for estimates.* Claims are not normally payable for fees paid to obtain estimates of repair in conjunction with submitting a claim under this subpart. However, where, in the opinion of the adjudicating authority, the claimant could not obtain an estimate without paying a fee, such a claim may be considered in an amount reasonable in relation to the value for the cost of repairs of the articles involved, provided that the evidence furnished clearly indicates that the amount of the fee paid will not be deducted from the cost of repairs if the work is accomplished by the estimator.

(17) *Items fraudulently claimed.* Claims are not payable for items fraudulently claimed. When investigation discloses that a claimant, claimant's agent, claimant's employee, or member of claimant's family has intentionally misrepresented an item claimed as to cost, condition, costs to repair, etc., the item will be disallowed in its entirety even though some actual damage has been sustained. However, if the remainder of the claim is proper, it may be paid. This does not preclude appropriate disciplinary action if warranted.

(18) *Minimum amount.* Loss or damage amounting to less than \$10.

§ 11.75 Claims involving carriers and insurers.

In the event the property which is the subject of a claim was lost or damaged while in the possession of a carrier or was insured, the following procedures will apply:

(a) Whenever property is damaged, lost, or destroyed while being shipped pursuant to authorized travel orders, the owner must file a written claim for reimbursement with the last commercial carrier known or believed to have handled the goods, or the carrier known to be in possession of the property when the damage or loss occurred, according to the terms of its bill of lading or contract, before submitting a claim against the Government under this subpart.

(1) If more than one bill of lading or contract was issued, a separate demand should be made against the last carrier on each such document.

(2) The demand should be made within the time limit provided in the policy

and prior to the filing of a claim against the Government.

(3) If it is apparent that the damage or loss is attributable to packing, storage, or unpacking while in the custody of the Government, no demand need be made against the carrier.

(b) Whenever property which is damaged, lost, or destroyed incident to the claimant's service is insured in whole or in part, the claimant must make demand in writing against the insurer for reimbursement under terms and conditions of the insurance coverage, prior to the filing of the concurrent claim against the Government.

(c) Failure to make a demand on a carrier or insurer or to make all reasonable efforts to protect and prosecute rights available against a carrier or insurer and to collect the amount recoverable from the carrier or insurer may result in reducing the amount recoverable from the Government by the maximum amount which would have been recoverable from the carrier or insurer, had the claim been timely or diligently prosecuted. However, no deduction will be made where the circumstances of the claimant's service preclude reasonable filing of such a claim or diligent prosecution, or the evidence indicates a demand was impracticable or would have been unavailing.

(d) Following the submission of the claim against the carrier or insurer, the claimant may immediately submit a claim against the Government in accordance with the provisions of this subpart, without waiting until either final approval or denial of the claim is made by the carrier or insurer.

(1) Upon submission of a claim to the Government, the claimant must certify in the claim that no recovery (or the amount of recovery) has been gained from a carrier or insurer, and enclose all correspondence pertinent thereto.

(2) If the carrier or insurer has not taken final action on the claim against them, by the time the claimant submits a claim to the Government, the claimant will immediately notify them to address all correspondence in regard to the claim to him/her, in care of the General Counsel of FEMA.

(3) The claimant shall timely advise the General Counsel in writing, of any

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action which is taken by the carrier or insurer on the claim. On request, the claimant also will furnish such evidence as may be required to enable the United States to enforce the claim.

(e) When a claim is paid by FEMA, the claimant will assign to the United States, to the extent of any payment on the claim accepted by claimant, all rights, title, and interest in any claim against the carrier, insurer, or other party arising out of the incident on which the claim against the Government is based. After payment of the claim by the Government, the claimant will, upon receipt of any payment from a carrier or insurer, pay the proceeds to the United States to the extent of the payment received by the claimant from the United States.

(f) When a claimant recovers for the loss from the carrier or insurer before the claim against the Government under this subpart is settled, the amount or recovery shall be applied to the claim as follows:

(1) When the amount recovered from a carrier, insurer, or other third party is greater than or equal to the claimant's total loss as determined under this subpart, no compensation is allowable under this subpart.

(2) When the amount recovered is less than such total loss, the allowable amount is determined by deducting the recovery from the amount of such total loss;

(3) For the purpose of this paragraph (f) the claimant's total loss is to be determined without regard to the \$25,000 maximum set forth above. However, if the resulting amount, after making this deduction, exceeds \$25,000, the claimant will be allowed only \$25,000.

§ 11.76 Claims procedures.

(a) *Filing a claim.* Applicants shall file claims in writing with the General Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington, DC 20472. Each written claim shall contain, as a minimum:

(1) Name, address, and place of employment of the claimant;

(2) Place and date of the damage or loss;

(3) A brief statement of the facts and circumstances surrounding the damage or loss;

(4) Cost, date, and place of acquisition of each price of property damaged or lost;

(5) Two itemized repair estimates, or value estimates, whichever is applicable;

(6) Copies of police reports, if applicable;

(7) A statement from the claimant's supervisor that the loss was incident to service;

(8) A statement that the property was or was not insured;

(9) With respect to claims involving thefts or losses in quarters or other places where the property was reasonably kept, a statement as to what security precautions were taken to protect the property involved;

(10) With respect to claims involving property being used for the benefit of the Government, a statement by the claimant's supervisor that the claimant was required to provide such property or that the claimant's providing it was in the interest of the Government; and

(11) Other evidence as may be required.

(b) *Single claim.* A single claim shall be presented for all lost or damaged property resulting from the same incident. If this procedure causes a hardship, the claimant may present an initial claim with notice that it is a partial claim, an explanation of the circumstances causing the hardship, and an estimate of the balance of the claim and the date it will be submitted. Payment may be made on a partial claim if the adjudicating authority determines that a genuine hardship exists.

(c) *Loss in quarters.* Claims for property loss in quarters or other authorized places should be accompanied by a statement indicating:

(1) Geographical location;

(2) Whether the quarters were assigned or provided in-kind by the Government;

(3) Whether the quarters are regularly occupied by the claimant;

(4) Names of the authority, if any, who designated the place of storage of the property if other than quarters;

(5) Measures taken to protect the property; and

(6) Whether the claimant is a local inhabitant.

(d) *Loss by theft or robbery.* Claims for property loss by theft or robbery should be accompanied by a statement indicating:

- (1) Geographical location;
- (2) Facts and circumstances surrounding the loss, including evidence of the crime such as breaking and entering, capture of the thief or robber, or recovery of part of the stolen goods; and
- (3) Evidence that the claimant exercised due care in protecting the property prior to the loss, including information as to the degree of care normally exercised in the locale of the loss due to any unusual risks involved.

(e) *Transportation losses.* Claims for transportation losses should be accompanied by the following:

- (1) Copies of orders authorizing the travel, transportation, or shipment or a certificate explaining the absence of orders and stating their substance;
- (2) Statement in cases where property was turned over to a shipping officer, supply officer, or contract packer indicating:
 - (i) Name (or designation) and address of the shipping officer, supply officer, or contract packer indicating;
 - (ii) Date the property was turned over;
 - (iii) Inventoried condition when the property was turned over;
 - (iv) When and where the property was packed and by whom;
 - (v) Date of shipment;
 - (vi) Copies of all bills of lading, inventories, and other applicable shipping documents;
 - (vii) Date and place of delivery to the claimant;
 - (viii) Date the property was unpacked by the carrier, claimant, or Government;
 - (ix) Statement of disinterested witnesses as to the condition of the property when received and delivered, or as to handling or storage;
 - (x) Whether the negligence of any Government employee acting within the scope of his/her employment caused the damage or loss;
 - (xi) Whether the last common carrier or local carrier was given a clear receipt, except for concealed damages;
 - (xii) Total gross, tare, and new weight of shipment;

(xiii) Insurance certificate or policy if losses are privately insured;

(xiv) Copy of the demand on carrier or insured, or both, when required, and the reply, if any;

(xv) Action taken by the claimant to locate missing baggage or household effects, including related correspondence.

(f) *Marine or aircraft disaster.* Claims for property losses due to marine or aircraft disaster should be accompanied by a copy of orders or other evidence to establish the claimant's right to be, or to have property on board.

(g) *Enemy action, public disaster, or public service.* Claims for property losses due to enemy action, public disaster, or public service should be accompanied by:

- (1) Copies of orders or other evidence establishing the claimant's required presence in the area involved; and
- (2) A detailed statement of facts and circumstances showing an applicable case enumerated in § 11.73(c)(8).

(h) *Money.* Claims for loss of money deposited for safekeeping, transmittal, or other authorized disposition should be accompanied by:

- (1) Name, grade, and address of the person or persons who received money and any others involved;
- (2) Name and designation of the authority who authorized such person or persons to accept personal funds and the disposition required; and
- (3) Receipts and written sworn statements explaining the failure to account for funds or return them to the claimant.

(i) *Motor vehicles or mobile homes in transit.* Claims for damage to motor vehicles or mobile homes in transit should be accompanied by a copy of orders or other available evidence to establish the claimant's lawful right to have the property shipped and evidence to establish damage in transit.

§ 11.77 Settlement of claims.

(a) The General Counsel, FEMA, is authorized to settle (consider, ascertain, adjust, determine, and dispose of, whether by full or partial allowance or disallowance) any claim under this subpart.

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(b) The General Counsel may formulate such procedures and make such re-delegations as may be required to fulfill the objectives of this subpart.

(c) The General Counsel shall conduct or request the Office of Inspector General to conduct such investigation as may be appropriate in order to determine the validity of a claim.

(d) The General Counsel shall notify a claimant in writing of action taken on their claim, and if partial or full disallowance is made, the reasons therefor.

(e) In the event a claim submitted against a carrier under § 11.75 has not been settled, before settlement of the claim against the Government pursuant to this subpart, the General Counsel shall notify such carrier or insurer to pay the proceeds of the claim to FEMA to the extent FEMA has paid such to claimant in settlement.

(f) The settlement of a claim under this subpart, whether by full or partial allowance or disallowance, is final and conclusive.

§ 11.78 Computation of amount of award.

(a) The amount allowed for damage to or loss of any items of property may not exceed the cost of the item (either the price paid in cash or property, or the value at the time of acquisition if not acquired by purchase or exchange), and there will be no allowance for replacement cost or for appreciation in the value of the property. Subject to these limitations, the amount allowable is either:

(1) The depreciated value, immediately prior to the loss or damage, of property lost or damaged beyond economical repair, less any salvage value; or

(2) The reasonable cost or repairs, when property is economically repairable, provided that the cost of repairs does not exceed the amount allowable under paragraph (a)(1) of this section.

(b) Depreciation in value is determined by considering the type of article involved, its costs, its conditions when damaged or lost, and the time elapsed between the date of acquisition and the date of damage or loss.

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(c) Replacement of lost or damaged property may be made in-kind whenever appropriate.

§ 11.79 Attorney's fees.

No more than 10 per centum of the amount paid in settlement of each individual claim submitted and settled under this subpart shall be paid or delivered to or received by any agent or attorney on account of services rendered in connection with that claim. A person violating this section shall be fined not more than \$1,000.

(Information collection approved by Office of Management and Budget under Control No. 3067-0167)

PART 12—ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Sec.

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AUTHORITY: Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. app. 1; Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1978; E.O. 12127; E.O. 12148; E.O. 12024.

SOURCE: 45 FR 64180, Sept. 29, 1980, unless otherwise noted.

§ 12.1 Purpose and applicability.

(a) The regulations in this part implement the Federal Advisory Committee Act, Executive Order 12024 and General Services Administration Regulation 41 CFR part 101-6. The provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act in this part shall apply to all advisory